

Statement on the Roadmap for Peace in the Middle East *April 30, 2003*

On March 14, I noted the important steps taken by the Palestinian Legislative Council (PLC) toward the creation of an empowered, accountable office of Prime Minister. The PLC has now confirmed a new Palestinian Prime Minister and Cabinet. Today the roadmap for peace developed by the United States over the last several months in close cooperation with Russia, the European Union, and the United Nations has been presented to Israel and the Palestinians.

The roadmap represents a starting point toward achieving the vision of two states, a secure state of Israel and a viable, peaceful, democratic Palestine, that I set out on June 24, 2002. It is a framework for progress towards lasting peace and security in the Middle East. Implementing the roadmap will depend upon the good faith

efforts and contributions of both sides. The pace of progress will depend strictly on the performance of the parties.

I urge Israelis and Palestinians to work with us and with other members of the international community and above all directly with each other to immediately end the violence and return to a path of peace based on the principles and objectives outlined in my statement of June 24, 2002. Both Israelis and Palestinians have suffered from the terror and violence and from the loss of hope in a better future of peace and security. An opportunity now exists to move forward. The United States will do all it can to seize this opportunity. To that end, I have asked Secretary Powell to travel to the region to begin working with the parties so that we can take advantage of this moment.

Message to the Senate Transmitting Amendments to the Constitution and Convention of the International Telecommunication Union *April 30, 2003*

To the Senate of the United States:

I transmit herewith for Senate advice and consent to ratification, the amendments to the Constitution and Convention of the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) (Geneva 1992), as amended by the Plenipotentiary Conference (Kyoto 1994), together with declarations and reservations by the United States as contained in the Final Acts of the Plenipotentiary Conference (Minneapolis 1998). I transmit also, for the information of the Senate, the report of the Department of State concerning these amendments.

Prior to 1992, and as a matter of general practice, previous Conventions of the ITU were routinely replaced at successive Pleni-

potentiary Conferences held every 5 to 10 years. In 1992, the ITU adopted a permanent Constitution and Convention. The Constitution contains fundamental provisions on the organization and structure of the ITU, as well as substantive rules applicable to international telecommunications matters. The ITU Convention contains provisions concerning the functioning of the ITU and its constituent organs.

Faced with a rapidly changing telecommunication environment, the ITU in 1994 adopted a few amendments to the 1992 Constitution and Convention. These amendments were designed to enable the ITU to respond effectively to new challenges posed.

The pace at which the telecommunication market continues to evolve has not eased. States participating in the 1998 ITU Plenipotentiary Conference held in Minneapolis submitted numerous proposals to amend the Constitution and Convention. As discussed in the attached report of the Department of State concerning the amendments, key proposals included the following: amendments to clarify the rights and obligations of Member States and Sector Members; amendments to increase private sector participation in the ITU with the understanding that the ITU is to remain an intergovernmental organization; amendments to strengthen the finances of the ITU; and amendments to provide for alternative procedures for the adoption and approval of questions and recommendations.

Consistent with longstanding practice in the ITU, the United States, in signing the 1998 amendments, made certain declarations and reservations. These declarations and reservations are discussed in the report of the Department of State, which is attached hereto.

The 1992 Constitution and Convention and the 1994 amendments thereto entered

into force for the United States on October 26, 1997. The 1998 amendments to the 1992 Constitution and Convention as amended in 1994 entered into force on January 1, 2000, for those states, which, by that date, had notified the Secretary General of the ITU of their approval thereof. As of the beginning of this year, 26 states had notified the Secretary General of the ITU of their approval of the 1998 amendments.

Subject to the U.S. declarations and reservations mentioned above, I believe the United States should ratify the 1998 amendments to the ITU Constitution and Convention. They will contribute to the ITU's ability to adapt to a rapidly changing telecommunication environment and, in doing so, will serve the needs of the United States Government and U.S. industry.

I recommend that the Senate give early and favorable consideration to these amendments and that the Senate give its advice and consent to ratification.

GEORGE W. BUSH

The White House,
April 30, 2003.

Message to the Senate Transmitting the Protocol of Amendment to the International Convention on the Simplification and Harmonization of Customs Procedures *April 30, 2003*

To the Senate of the United States:

I transmit herewith for Senate advice and consent to accession, the Protocol of Amendment to the International Convention on the Simplification and Harmonization of Customs Procedures done at Brussels on June 26, 1999. The Protocol amends the International Convention on the Simplification and Harmonization of Customs Procedures done at Kyoto on May 18, 1973, and replaces the Annexes to the

1973 Convention with a General Annex and 10 Specific Annexes (together, the "Amended Convention"). I am also transmitting, for the information of the Senate, the report of the Department of State on the Amended Convention.

The Amended Convention seeks to meet the needs of international trade and customs services through the simplification and harmonization of customs procedures. It responds to modernization in business and